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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/491,581	01/25/2000	Shigeto Igarashi	2811	8717

7590 07/31/2002

Law Office of David O'Reilly
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EXAMINER

VU, NGOC YEN T

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

2612

DATE MAILED: 07/31/2002

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Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.
09/491,581

Applicant(s)
Shigetō IGARASHI

Examiner
Ngoc-Yen VU

Art Unit
2612



-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136 (a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on May 9, 2002
- 2a) ☐ This action is FINAL. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 35 C.D. 11; 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 17-22 ~~is/are~~ pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above, claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 17-22 ~~is/are~~ rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claims _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirements.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgement is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some* c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
*See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgement is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e).
a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgement is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s). _____ 6) ☐ Other: _____

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Response to Amendment

1. The amendments, filed on 05/09/2002, have been entered and made of record. Claims 17-22 are pending.

Response to Arguments

2. Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1-16, filed on 05/09/2002, have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection. This Office action is not made final.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The text of those sections of Title 35, U.S. Code not included in this action can be found in a prior Office action.

3. Claims 17-22 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Iketani (US #4,903,136) in view of Thommen (US #3,555,181).

Regarding claim 17, Iketani '136 teaches in a signal amplifying circuit for a CCD camera the improvement comprising a first automatic gain control auxiliary amplifying circuit having a low amplification degree (AGC 24, SW 36 at EF terminal, and SW 32 at DN) and a second automatic gain control auxiliary amplifying circuit having a high amplification degree (AGC 24,

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SW 36 at EF terminal, and SW 32 at UP), and selecting means for selecting said automatic gain control auxiliary amplifying circuits as needed (col. 2 line 11 - col. 4 line 58).

Claim 17 differs from Iketani in that the claim further requires the first automatic gain control auxiliary amplifying circuit having a high S/N ratio and low amplification degree and the second automatic gain control auxiliary amplifying circuit having a low S/N ratio and high amplification degree. However, the limitations are well known in the art as taught in Thommen. In the same field of endeavor, Thommen '181 teaches an automatic video level control employing iris and amplifier gain adjustments (see Fig. 1; col. 2 line 68 - col. 4 line 38). Thommen further teaches that the high gain of the variable gain amplifier 17 creates a low S/N ratio and the low gain of the variable gain amplifier 17 creates a high S/N ratio (see col. 4 line 40 - col. 5 line 20). In light of the teaching from Thommen, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to recognize that the low and high amplification degree of the AGC 24 taught in Iketani creates a high and low S/N ratio, respectively.

As to claim 18, Iketani teaches the signal amplifying circuit including a video camera signal processing circuit (signal processing circuit 26) having said first and second automatic gain control auxiliary amplifying circuits in a single AGC amplifying circuit (AGC 24) and a switch for selectively switching between said amplification degree function of said first or second automatic gain control circuit (col. 3 line 37 - col. 4 line 58).

As to claim 19, Iketani and Thommen teach a detector for detecting a change of object illumination by detecting a video output signal level, said detector selectively switching between

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said first and second automatic gain control circuits to provide the appropriate degree of amplification (Iketani, col. 3 lines 2+; Thommen, col. 3 line 41 - col. 4 line 39).

Regarding claims **20-22**, the subject matter in claims 20-22 can be found in claims 17-19.

Conclusion

4. Any response to this office action should be mailed to:

Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks

Washington, D.C. 20231

or faxed to:

(703) 872-9314, (for formal communications intended for entry)

(for informal or draft communications, please label

"PROPOSED" or "DRAFT")

Hand-delivered responses should be brought to Crystal Park II, 2121 Crystal Drive, Arlington, VA.,
Sixth Floor (Receptionist).

5. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Ngoc-Yen Vu whose telephone number is (703) 305-4946. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon - Fri from 8 am to 4:30 pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, **Wendy Garber**, can be reached on (703) 305-4929.

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Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the customer service office whose telephone number is (703) 306-0377.

NYV
07/29/2002



NGOC-YEN VU
PRIMARY EXAMINER
Group Art Unit 2612